



HIRSCHL & ADLER MODERN

Louisa Lizbeth Chase was born in 1951 to Benjamin and Wilda Stengel Chase in Panama City, Panama, where her father, a West Point graduate, was stationed. The family moved to Pennsylvania in 1958. Chase attended the George School, a private Quaker-sponsored boarding school in Bucks County. Initially intending to study classics at Syracuse University, she discovered printmaking and graduated with a Bachelors in Fine Arts in 1973. A Yale summer program confirmed her direction and she enrolled at the Yale University School of Art, earning her Masters in Fine Arts (MFA) degree in 1975.

It was clear, early on, that Louisa Chase was special. In her final year in graduate school, she was selected for a solo show of “floor pieces” at the Artists Space, a non-profit gallery dedicated to showcasing emerging talent, located on Wooster Street in the heart of Soho, Manhattan’s burgeoning artist neighborhood. Degree in hand, Chase moved to downtown Manhattan, and became a part of the vibrant downtown art scene of the late 1970s and 1980s. As a young artist, Chase did what other young artists do. She taught—commuting to the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence from 1975 to 1979, and closer to home at the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, from 1980 to 1982. In her downtown studio, she painted, made prints, and explored woodblock. As she worked, she garnered a series of solo shows and participated in a host of group exhibitions highlighting contemporary artists, including Barbara Rose’s 1979 manifesto at the Grey Art Gallery, New York University, “American Painting: The Eighties;” the Whitney

Museum Biennial in 1982; and the American group contribution to the Venice Biennale in 1984. Chase's work attracted serious, positive, and respectful notice in the art press, including, among many others, *The Village Voice* (Kim Levin, "The Secret Life of Louisa Chase," Jan. 28, 1981), *The New York Times* ("Louisa Chase," February 17, 1989), and *Arts Magazine* (Richard Kalina "Louisa Chase," May 1989, p. 90).

Throughout her career, Chase remained a questing spirit, freely experimenting with various media. Similarly, her oeuvre reveals a variety of approaches at different times, so that, despite having attracted a number of labels, among them "new image school," and "neo expressionist," there is not one distinctive "Chase style." Her credited influences range from the medieval Italian Sienna painters through Jackson Pollack. What never wavered was the artist's intention to make visual on canvas her inner emotional state. In 1979, Chase wrote "painting for me is a constant search to hold a feeling tangible" (as quoted by Alexandra Anderson-Spivy in *Finding a New Language: Louisa Chase's Recent Paintings*, exhib. cat. Foundation Kajikawa, Kyoto, Japan, 1991, p. 6). For a 1982 group show at the Whitney Museum, Chase wrote that "The forces closest to landscape are the closest to the internal forces that I am trying to understand. . . . The location is inside."

Chase's work is represented in the permanent collections of a number of noted museums—the Whitney Museum of Art in New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MOMA); the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Brooklyn Museum; The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; the Albright-Knox Art

Gallery, Buffalo, New York; the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio; and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.

In 1991, Chase moved to Sag Harbor, on the eastern end of Long Island, and then to nearby East Hampton where she bought a small 1930 farmhouse with a separate studio. As with lower Manhattan, Chase chose a location with an art community that was congenial and collegial. She was living in East Hampton when she died in 2016 after a seven-year-long struggle with cancer.